

Asthma Awareness and Prevention

Facts about Asthma in Washington State:

- Asthma occurs everywhere in the State
- About 1.1 per 100,000 deaths is due to asthma
- Self-reported asthma cases increased 75% over the past decade, but hospitalizations have been reduced in part due to interventions and appropriate medications
- Hospitalizations and even occasional deaths due to Asthma can be reduced through effective prevention, early detection, and reducing environmental and occupational allergens
- In households where adults have asthma, 34% of the children also have asthma, but in households where no adult has asthma, only 14% of children have the disease

Comprehensive & Effective Intervention Strategies:

- Asthma patients need action plans for when and how to take medications correctly
- People with asthma must take part in daily long-term therapy that reduces underlying inflammation and other symptoms

For more information:

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The Washington State Department of Health Asthma Awareness program instigates and directs a collective statewide effort to develop, implement, and maintain a state asthma preparation plan. The goal is to reduce asthma causing triggers and asthma related health complications, even death, in Washington.

Accomplishments come by:

- **Bringing several partners together** including public and private stakeholders to develop a planned approach for reducing asthma related triggers and asthma attacks
- **Identifying and utilizing proven research methods** and develop them into effective public health interventions
- **Applying evidence-based solutions** that will ensure sound stewardship of funds and current knowledge that will bring about the best results possible
- **Using limited resources more efficiently** by coordinating efforts so duplication of efforts is minimized and impact of interventions
- **Using limited resources more effectively** by prioritizing Community-based programs that rely heavily on public health nurses, sanitarians and community health workers and their proposed interventions

Washington Asthma Initiative is a combined statewide effort of health care providers, physicians, public health workers, public schools, day care centers and the Washington State Department of Health. The American Lung Association of Washington leads the program and has identified four components, or factors that can make asthma worse. Environmental and occupational allergens and irritants are the main focus of intervention. Effective asthma management reduces the need for hospitalizations and urgent care visits and enables asthma sufferers to enjoy normal activities in their daily lives.

Educating the community, schools and the general public appears to be the most comprehensive and cost effective way to address the disparity. The Department of Health, working with the above-mentioned groups, will provide fiscal, operational and technical support using up to date priorities and decision-making processes already in place.

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